

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MATAMO 00013 211521Z

43

ACTION SCSE-00

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 ISO-00 SCA-01 L-03 H-02 FBIE-00 DHA-02

NSC-05 USPS-01 /025 W

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P R 202123Z JAN 76

FM AMCONSUL MATAMOROS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 174

INFO AMEMBASSY MEXICO

AMCONSUL CIUDAD JUAREZ

AMCONSUL NUEVO LAREDO

AMCONSUL TIJUANA

UNCLAS MATAMOROS 0013

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: CASC - MX

SUB: IMPRISONED AMERICANS USE OF CONSULAR POST OFFICE BOX

REF: 75 MATAMOROS 0100

1. RECENT LOCAL PRESS STORIES RELATE VARIOUS ATTEMPTS TO SMUGGLE DRUGS AND OTHER CONTRABAND INTO PRISONERS MATAMOROS CITY JAIL. WHILE AMCIT PRISONERS NOT REPEAT NOT INVOLVED THESE INCIDENTS, THEY ARE SPECIFIC REMINDER OF HIGH RISK INVOLVED IN CONSULATE'S CURRENT PRACTICE OF PERMITTING FRIENDS AND RELATIVES OF AMCIT PRISONERS TO USE CONSULATE'S U.S. P.O. BOX FOR SENDING PACKAGES, ETC.

CONSULATE PERSONNEL PICK UP MAIL AND PACKAGES, ENTER MEXICO WITHOUT CUSTOMS INSPECTION AND UNOPENED PACKAGES ARE THEN DELIVERED TO PRISON WARDEN'S OFFICE FOR INSPECTION AND DELIVERY TO PRISONER ADDRESSEE.

2. WHILE THIS SYSTEM HAS WORKED ADMIRABLY TO DATE, ONE INCIDENT OF ILLICIT SMUGGLING IN PACKAGES RECEIVED IN THIS MANNER WOULD RISK NOT ONLY TERMINATION OF PRIVILEGE FOR PRISONERS, BUT MIGHT CAUSE GOM AUTHORITIES TO REQUIRE INSPECTION OF ALL OTHER PERSONAL CONSULAR MAIL WHICH HERETOFORE HAS ENTERED FREELY, AND COULD THUS JEOPARDIZE OTHER CONSULAR PRIVILEGES.

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PAGE 02 MATAMO 00013 211521Z

3. IN ABSENCE OF REQUESTED GUIDANCE (SEE REFTTEL) WE PROPOSE
REQUEST AMCIT PRISONERS TO ADVISE CORRESPONDENTS AS FOLLOWS:

(A) ALL MAIL AND PACKAGES ARE SUBJECT TO AND MAY BE OPENED
FOR INSPECTION PRIOR TO DELIVERY:

(B) ALL PACKAGES MUST BEAR LEGEND "MAY BE OPENED FOR
INSPECTION" OR WILL BE RETURNED UNOPENED TO SENDER.

4. CONSULATE BELIEVES THIS PROCEDURE WOULD GO FAR TOWARD
INSURING THAT SENDERS ARE AWARE OF RISKS IN SMUGGLING, AND
WILL REDUCE RISK THAT CONSULATE COULD BE BLAMED AND
PENALIZED.

5. EMBASSY AND DEPARTMENT'S GUIDANCE IS AGAIN SOLICITED,
SINCE WE BELIEVE THAT OTHER BORDER CONSULAR POSTS OBSERVE
SAME PRACTICES WITH REGARD TO USE OF P.O. BOX, AND THUS
ALL BORDER POSTS MAY BE RUNNING SMILAR RISKS.
SMITH

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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